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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Letter dated 31 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, I have the honour to enclose herewith a statement by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, adopted on Thursday, 31 January 2008 (see annex).

The recent failure of the Security Council to act to address the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, resulting from the illegal and deliberate policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population, constitute a clear example of the lack of capacity of this organ to effectively fulfil its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security conferred by Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations.

Furthermore, I kindly request that the above-mentioned document be circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations
Chairman of the Coordinating Bureau
of the Non-Aligned Movement

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Annex to the letter dated 31 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip

The Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) expresses its deep regret that, once again, the Security Council was unable to act to address the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, resulting from the illegal and deliberate policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power against the Palestinian civilian population.

This recent failure of the Security Council to deal with the situation in Gaza will not help to ameliorate the situation on the ground, will not help to advance the peace process and will not engender confidence in the credibility of the Security Council and its ability to effectively address those serious issues that come before it.

NAM expresses its appreciation to the members of the NAM Caucus in the Security Council and to other members of the Security Council, in fact the overwhelming majority of them, that exerted serious efforts and acted in good faith in an effort to have the Security Council uphold its responsibilities and respond in a timely and practical manner to the ongoing escalating tragedy in the Gaza Strip.

NAM reiterates its deep concern about the critical humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the ongoing illegal Israeli practices throughout the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, and once again calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to abide by its obligations under international law and to immediately cease its collective punishment of the Palestinian people and all other illegal actions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. NAM calls upon Israel to open the Gaza Strip's border crossings to allow for the movement of persons and goods, including essential humanitarian supplies, such as food and medicine, and fuel supplies in order to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of the Palestinian civilian population. In this regard NAM welcomes the Palestinian Authority proposal to assume responsibility for the Palestinian side of the Gaza Strip's border crossings.

NAM reaffirms its commitment to continuing its efforts to alleviating the hardship of the Palestinian people during this difficult time and to promoting the achievement of a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, with the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

New York, 31 January 2008